

What is claimed is:

1. An insert which can be placed within a housing structure mounted in a washing machine drum, the insert comprising at least one compartment for containing one or more laundry additive materials which are to be added at the same or different times to the contents of the washing machine drum during the laundering cycle; the insert further comprising a key having a characteristic shape that interfaces with the housing to ensure that the insert is properly associated with the housing.
2. The insert of claim 1 wherein the insert includes at least two compartments that are contiguous and form a key in a space between the compartments.
3. The insert of claim 2 wherein the compartments are contiguous and have a V-shaped bottom, and the key is formed by the space between the V-shaped bottoms of the compartments.
4. The insert of claim 1 wherein the key is an aperture in the insert.
5. The insert of claim 4 wherein the aperture is uniquely shaped to interface with a correspondingly shaped element in the housing such that only inserts having the key are receivable in the housing.
6. The insert of claim 1 wherein the key is a member having a characteristic shape that extends or protrudes from the insert and interfaces with an aperture or a space in the housing such that only inserts having the key are receivable in the housing.
7. The insert of claim 6 wherein the key is a post.
8. The insert of claim 4 wherein the aperture is circular.
9. The insert of claim 4 wherein the aperture is triangular.
10. The insert of claim 1 wherein the key is a notch at an edge of the insert.
11. The insert of claim 10 wherein the notch is U-shaped or curved and interfaces with a U-shaped or curved member on the housing.

12. The insert of claim 10 wherein the notch is V-shaped and interfaces with a V-shaped member on the housing.

13. A system for dispensing laundry additive materials into the different stages of a laundering cycle which occur during the operation of a drum-containing automatic fabric laundering washing machine, which comprises:

A) a housing structure positioned within the washing machine in a fixed spatial relationship to the washing machine drum;

B) an insert which can be placed within the housing structure including at least one compartment for containing one or more laundry additive materials which are to be added at the same or different times to the contents of the washing machine drum during the laundering cycle; the insert further comprising a key having a characteristic shape that interfaces with the housing to ensure that the insert is properly associated with the housing.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein the housing structure includes a base and an openable and closeable lid.

15. The system of claim 13 wherein the insert contains one compartment for wash additive material and/or one compartment for rinse additive material.

16. The system of Claim 13 wherein the insert is constructed from thermoformed polymeric material.

17. The system of Claim 13 wherein the multi-compartmented insert is constructed at least in part from flexible polymeric material.

18. The system of Claim 13 wherein the insert is constructed such that after cessation of the spin cycle, substantially all of the contents of the opened rinse additive compartment(s) of the insert flow into the washing machine drum.

19. The system of claim 13 wherein the insert includes at least two spaced compartments and the key is formed by the space between the compartments.

20. The system of claim 18 wherein the compartments have V-shaped bottoms and the key is formed by a space between the V-shaped bottoms of the compartments.
21. The system of claim 13 wherein the key is an aperture in the insert.
22. The system of claim 20 wherein the aperture is uniquely shaped to interface with a correspondingly shaped element in the housing such that only inserts having the key are receivable in the housing.
23. The system of claim 13 wherein the key is a member having a characteristic shape that extends from the insert and interfaces with an aperture or a space in the housing such that only inserts having the key are receivable in the housing.
24. The system of claim 22 wherein the key is a post.
25. The system of claim 22 wherein the aperture is circular.
26. The system of claim 22 wherein the aperture is triangular.
27. The system of claim 22 wherein the key is a notch at the edge of the insert.
28. The system of claim 26 wherein the notch is U-shaped.
29. The system of claim 26 wherein the notch is V-shaped.